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Security Council

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Identical letters dated 17 August 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

I refer to our previous letters, the most recent of which were the identical letters dated 2 August 2017 (S/2017/675), concerning the barbaric attacks on innocent Syrian civilians committed by the "international coalition" led by the United States of America. In that connection, and on instructions from my Government, I wish to transmit the following information:

On Wednesday, 16 August 2017, "coalition" warplanes once again bombarded residential neighbourhoods inhabited by civilians in the city of Raqqah, killing 17 civilians and injuring dozens more, most of whom were women and children, and causing material damage to infrastructure and public and private property.

In three successive air raids, "coalition" aircraft deliberately targeted Sayyidat al-Bisharah Church in the Thuknah neighbourhood of Raqqah. Although there were no Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant terrorists inside the church, it was completely destroyed.

United States warplanes and "coalition" aircraft continue to bombard residential neighbourhoods and communities inhabited by civilians and employ arsenals of "smart" missiles, guided bombs and internationally prohibited white phosphorous bombs. This systematic and deliberate conduct by the coalition openly flouts the most basic principles set out in international law, international humanitarian law and human rights instruments and attests to the belief of successive American administrations that might makes right and in the law of the jungle. Such conduct is contrary to the obligations of a permanent member of the Security Council, the fundamental responsibility of which is to maintain international peace and security.

The Syrian Arab Republic condemns in the strongest possible terms the crimes committed by the "international coalition" against Syrian civilians. Those crimes are, in fact, war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Syrian Arab Republic calls upon the participating States, which claim that they respect international humanitarian law, to dissolve promptly that illegitimate coalition, which was established without a request from the Syrian Government and outside recognized international and United Nations frameworks, or to withdraw from it, as it contravenes all the values in which we believe.

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The Syrian Arab Republic once again calls on the Security Council to fulfil its responsibility to maintain international peace and security, and to put an end to that coalition's crimes against Syrian civilians and hold it accountable for them.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i.